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Security Information

4 September 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director, Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Comments on Attached Draft.

1. In accordance with your instructions I have carefully thought over the content of the attached draft and give you herewith my honest security advice on it, full well knowing that the ultimate decision rests with you.

2. I advise that the implementation of this paper would decentralize security responsibility to the detriment of the security of the Agency, would set up six or more variants in the implementation of personnel security policy, would imperil the "privacy" of investigative files and sources, would cause duplication of effort and increased and unnecessary administrative handling. I further believe that the Director of Central Intelligence cannot divorce himself from direct responsibility thru his Security Officer for the clearance of all persons employed or used by this Agency. This comes within the Director's responsibility for protection of intelligence sources and methods.

3. I base my advice on these security principles and upon seven years study of personnel security techniques and methods, both in CIA and other Government agencies.

(1) Personnel Security requires a centralized authority directly under the DCI who implements the DCI policy on an unbiased basis "across the board".

(2) The Director of Security must have the full confidence of the DCI to carry out properly his functions. If the DCI does not have this full confidence, he must select an official in which he can impose this confidence rather than delegating the responsibility to several other officials however senior.

(3) The appraisal of security risk is a highly professional function and requires trained security personnel who are not charged with other intelligence duties.

(4) CIA is a Number 1 target and it has had, and must continue to have, a "tough" and "tight" personnel security policy implemented directly under the DCI.

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(5) The principle that the prospective direct employer of the man, who is very apt to be influenced by operational pressures, should not be the authority who security evaluates him.

4. The command security responsibility of Deputy Directors and of all Chiefs of Office is one of their most important functions. It should be exercised by providing much closer security supervision of their personnel and their operations. Only by this supervision can we avoid many serious breaches that occur weekly such as talking shop at cocktail parties, disregarding security regulations, failing to take disciplinary action against security offenders, indiscreet conversation of senior officials, etc. This office stands ready at all times to make ourselves available to assist our senior people in these matters. In addition, I will take every step possible to personally liaison with and support Deputy Directors and to acquaint them immediately with all security problems, including clearances.

Sheffield Edwards  
Colonel, GSC  
Director of Security

Attachment: One  
Draft.

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